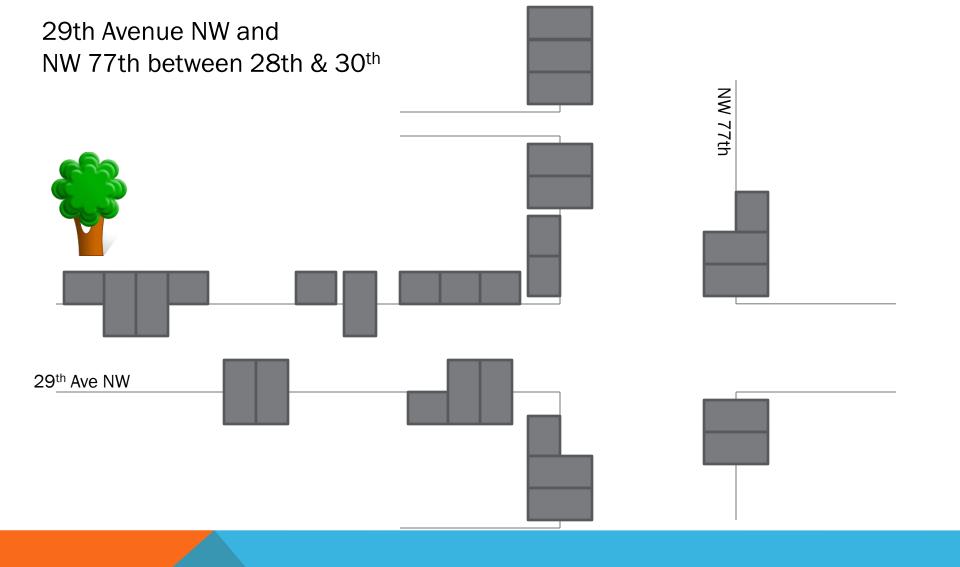


Presented by residents on 29th Avenue NW and NW 77th between 28th & 30<sup>th</sup> Blog: http://ballardraingardengue.wordpress.com Facebook: "The Ballard Raingardengue" (Community Page)



### WHO WE ARE > LOCATION

### PROPOSED PILOT RAINGARDENS



Ballard is 25% of Seattle's run-off into Puget Sound.

This is the project we supported:

One reason cited for selection:

Community support





Vegetation: "DIVERSITY -It's a VERY "good thing"!

- From SPU's Project Presentation



Original presentation described them: "shallow vegetative depressions"

Pilot Project Presentation

WHO WE ARE > THE BEGINNING

# SAVE OUR PUGET SOUND Fix the Ballard Roadside Raingardens

# ISSUES

### PROTOTYPE DESIGN

### Standing water until 72 hours after rain stops

- Deeper pits conceived to collect and drain large volumes of water.
- In neighborhoods, drainage should be immediate and constant.
- Standing water should only be in detention basins in large, open areas (e.g. parking lots, parks, beaches).



Picture of Naturalized Urban Detention Basin



Applying 2010 Rainfalls to Design Stretches with no rain/trace (≥ 3 days) Subtracting 3 days to drain ("dr")

January	February	March	April
3 - 3 dr = 0	6 - 3 dr = 3	3 - 3 dr = 0	4 - 3 dr = 1
4 - 3 dr = 1		3 - 3 dr = 0	
1 day	3 days	0 days	1 day

5 days with no standing water in 4-month period

### **DEFINITION BASED ON DESIGN:**

Water-retention pond

(Reference: Groundwater Foundation)







- Clay soil
- Vashon Glacial Till (first 17 feet)
- Water table too high in places (former creek?)
- Only 2 spots tested



### **INEFFICIENCY**

Raingardens not draining or percolating too slowly.

		Stani	ding Water	Ohserved			Inches of Rainfall
Date	Cell A	Cell B	Cell C	Cell D	Cell E	Cell F	0.70
12/10/2010		- Cemb	- CCII C	een b	- CCII E	Х	0.00
12/11/2010		х			Х	Х	1.42
12/12/2010		х	Х		Х	Х	2.19
12/13/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.46
12/14/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.82
12/15/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.11
12/16/2010			Х			Х	0.02
12/17/2010							0.00
12/18/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.08
12/19/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.14
12/20/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.03
12/21/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.01
12/22/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.01
12/23/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.25
12/24/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.44
12/25/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.32
12/26/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.09
12/27/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.44
12/28/2010			Х		Х	Х	0.02
12/29/2010					Х	Х	0.09
12/30/2010						Х	0.00
12/31/2010						Х	0.00

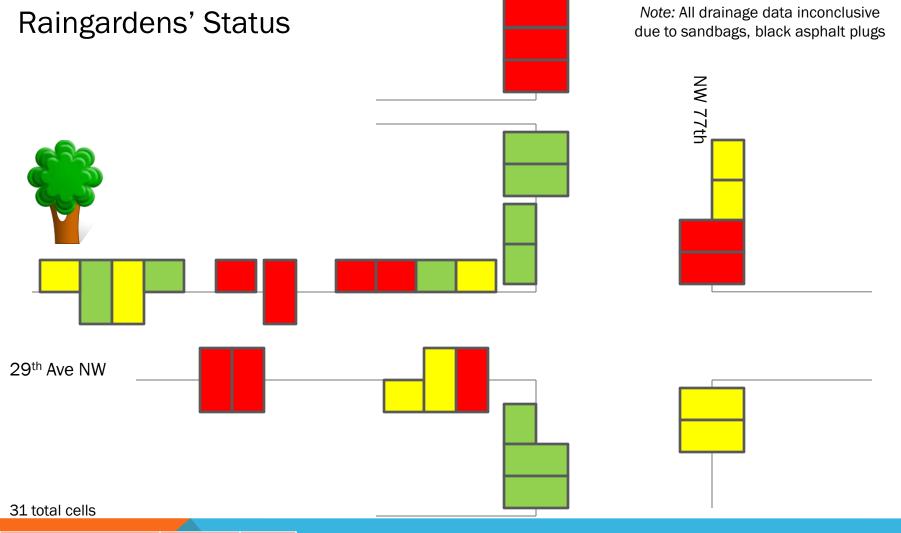
Cells C, E, F not functioning

### % of Raingardens *not* draining well:

SPU Measurements	12/17/2010	50%
Residents' Measurements	01/27/2011	68%

Note: All drainage data inconclusive due to sandbags, black asphalt plugs

ISSUES > STANDING WATER > INEFFICIENCY



Not draining at all – irrecoverable	12 cells	39%
Not draining – possibly recoverable	9 cells	29%
Draining / functioning properly	10 cells	32%

ISSUES > STANDING WATER > MAP

### **Drowning Hazard**

- Standing water should not exceed number of inches of water within which a child could drown.
- Children attracted to ponds, mud.
- Grass that could entangle a leg or arm planted at the bottom of Raingardens.
- Ground is "spongy," which could trap child's foot or hand.
- Critical liability for City.

### From WA State Drowning Prevention Network:

 Drowning is second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death to children.

Warning label on

5-gallon buckets

 Eliminate Potential Hazards: #1 Empty all buckets, containers, and wading pools.

### AWARNING



Children can fall into bucket and drown.

Keep children away from bucket with even a small amount of liquid.

### **OUR CHILDREN**



### **Babies & Toddlers**

- 1 2 inches of pooling water is hazard
- · Sources:
  - WA State Drowning Prevention Network
  - OR Department of Health and Services
  - American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
  - Children's Hospital
  - Safe Kids USA
  - Consumer Reports
- SPU data: 50% of Raingardens had more than 2 inches of water.

### Preschoolers & School Children

6 inches of pooling water is hazard

- SPU says it should not allow water deeper than six inches for school children (Chris Woelfel, SPU, "Drainage Issues in Roadside Raingardens," MyBallard.com, October 2010).
- SPU data: 13% of Raingardens had more than 6 inches of water.

ISSUES > STANDING WATER > SAFETY AND HEALTH > OUR CHILDREN > DROWNING HAZARD

These are *filled* with muddy water that was not supposed to be there in an area that was once fairly safe for children to play in their front yard. You can be a diligent parent and tragedies can still happen, and the city does not need to do their part to increase the odds. That's like saying the city can store TNT and a detonator in our front yards and if you are a diligent parent it won't be an issue.

I never knew that some amount of standing water was allowable. I really never thought of child safety in the project. Isn't any amount of water dangerous for child safety?

[The City] had better start puttin part of their paychecks into a fund to pay for the s lawsuits kx pa children are "water garden



ot only are they....a hazard to small chi I dren (we have an month old), but they don't drai n

In the end.

band

retain

sadly, you will

likely need to

together and

collectively

counsel to

attention to

these often

critical issue

demand

like ch.

Julet Repting for accidents.... to happen.

ely worried about a small child wandering off and falling into one of these. There is no doubt in my mind that these are drowning hazards.

Looking at the rain gardens, how can they not be a hazard for kids walking on the sidewalk?

Just wait till some ones kid does then everyone will be wanting dangerous ditch, and blame whoever they can....it is a clear

The issue of standing water is completely unacceptable. ...Someone is going to drown in those. Children walk to and from their elementary school every day through this neighborhood

More kids die every drowning than guns specifically olls

ve a 20-month-old son and am quite concerned about the rain gardens on our block. They contain stagnant, standing water for long periods of time, and standing water and the are an eyesore and a hazard. I would strongly caution anyone considering signing up for the rain garden program to discuss the pros and cons with a homeowner with a rain garden."

They should put them in the traffic circles in the middle of intersections....they are away from where kids would be playing,

The Ballard raingardens are a danger to kids, adults, and will just attract mosquite sit of handled nust Larn from our ors on how to do this

I am shocked....the safety of our children is just as necessary.

> I've worked in public health....More concerning to me is the amount of lure of playing in a "pond" that is so inviting to small children. Having such a liability in front of my house would be a weight I would be loathe to bear.

I had a daycare and one of the 18-month-old little boys I watched walked out from his parents' house and fell into two inches of rain water, hit his head, and drowned. He died in two inches. As well as distracted parents, even small amounts of water can be and are dangerous to children. FYI, children also drown accidently drown in it, God forbid, in drainage "ditches" all over the north and southwest, or anywhere there is an amount of standing water, or moving water, or tub water, any type of water. Ever seen the warning label on buckets over 1 1/2 feet tall? It's a picture of a toddler heads to roll for this dangerous, drowning in the bucket. You all seem to know more about trying to "care" for our future earth, which I agree with, than our real future... our children. So stop acting like the serious hazards or concerns don't matter or exist...it's ignorant.

**ISSUES > STANDING WATER > SAFETY AND HEALTH** > OUR CHILDREN > DROWNING HAZARD >

### **OUR CHILDREN**

### **Plastic Weirs**

- Children walk and run along slippery weirs
- Injury hazard (head)
- Knock head and fall into pooling water
- Aesthetics

### Suggested Remedies

- Cover plastic weirs with earthen berms (exists over water supply lines)
- Replace plastic weirs with natural stone





- Children walk on frozen (and semi-frozen)
   Raingardens
- Children jump into pits during snow with ice underneath
- Excess water flows onto street and freezes (bicyclists)

### Suggested Remedies

- No standing water
- No deep pits where water could quickly freeze

ISSUES > STANDING WATER > SAFETY AND HEALTH > OUR CHILDREN > PLASTIC WEIRS, ICE

### **MOSQUITOS AND RODENTS**

- Standing water a breeding ground for mosquitoes (promoting West Nile virus and other mosquito-borne illnesses).
- In functioning Raingardens, SPU's model requires majority of dry days in Seattle.
- Inefficient Raingardens: ~40% have standing water until pumped.
- SPU not pumping every three days (8-14 days).
- Leaves enough standing water for mosquitos to complete their lifecycle.
- From King Country DOH on West Nile:
  - #1 Tip: "Get rid of mosquito breeding habitat near your house"
  - Examples as small as birdbaths, puddles on tarps, leaky outdoor faucets

Applying 2010 Rainfalls to Design

Stretches with no rain/trace (≥ 3 days)

Subtracting 3 days to drain ("dr")

March	April	May
3 - 3 dr = 0	4 - 3 dr = 1	4 - 3 dr = 1
3 - 3 dr = 0		5 - 3 dr = 2
		5 - 3 dr = 2
No dry days	1 dry day	5 dry days

6 dry days in Raingardens in Spring 2010

### **Fight the Bite**





### **PETS**

- Contaminants from run-off in standing water
- Danger to pets and wildlife drinking from ponds and cleaning themselves after entering

ISSUES > STANDING WATER > SAFETY AND HEALTH > MOSQUITOS & RODENTS, PETS

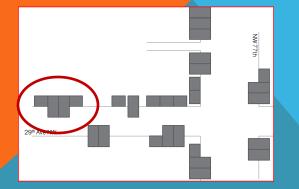
### TEST CASE #1

Raingarden East side of 29<sup>th</sup> Ave NW

**Location** Midway between NW 80<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup>

Note: Considered a potentially functioning Raingarden



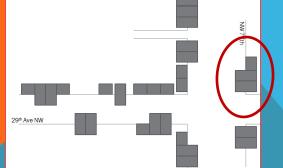


ISSUES > STANDING WATER >
DESIGN & INEFFICIENCY > TEST CASE #1

### TEST CASE #2

Raingarden South side of NW 77th
Location Closest to 29th Ave NW
Note: Considered a non-functioning Raingarden





ISSUES > STANDING WATER >
DESIGN & INEFFICIENCY > TEST CASE #2

### SUGGESTED REMEDIES

### Design

(functioning Raingardens)

- Raise bio-soil level
  - Better drainage, shallower Raingardens
  - Look and act like typical "Raingarden"
- Add mature plants and trees
- Add more vegetation
- Vary vegetation
  - Address drainage and depth

Target Timeline: Early Spring 2011

After bio-soil added, replant as necessary.

### Inefficiency

(not draining immediately and constantly)

- Remove bump-out if Raingarden deemed ineffective (a "dud").
  - Replace original plate



ISSUES > STANDING WATER >
DESIGN & INEFFICIENCY > SUGGESTED REMEDIES

### NOT A SUGGESTED REMEDY

### Submerged Drainage Pipes (for ineffective Raingardens)

- Residents theorize water table too high
  - Raingardens fill up hours after pumped when not raining
  - Newly-introduced/redirected drainage cause other problems: flood basements, etc.
- If pump to other cells, other cells too flooded
- Expensive: Cells need to be dug out and replanted - more construction
  - Still trial and error



Drainage underneath will not resolve the following issues:

- Injury hazard: Plastic weirs
- Property devaluation
- Unattractive signage
- Lack of vehicle passenger egress
- Narrow streets (from bump-outs)
- Reduced parking for residents and guests



STATUS OF RESIDENTS' GOALS > **NO DRAINAGE UNDERNEATH** 

### Aesthetic value is subjective

- "A messy neighbor can hamper your property by as much as 20 percent off the market value."
  - Sid Davis, author of A Survival Guide to Selling a Home (AMACOM, 2005).

### **Undesirable features:**

- Ponds
  - Drowning hazards
  - Injury hazards
  - Health risks (e.g., West Nile Virus)
- Signage on residential street
  - Eyesore
  - Feel of commercial zone
- Lack of curbside access
  - No vehicle passenger egress
- Narrow streets (from bump-outs)
- Reduced parking for residents and guests

### Potential buyers

- ~6,500 visitors to blog
- 106 Active Monthly Users on Facebook
- 1 favorable comment on appearance
- 51 unfavorable comments on appearance



### Maintenance / Perpetual Care

- Management needed for plants and litter
- City's commitment for future?

### **ISSUES > PROPERTY VALUE DEPRECIATION**

### SUGGESTED REMEDIES

for functioning Raingardens

- Raise bio-soil level to 4" or less below grade
- Remove signage
  - Paint curbs, add lane stripes
- Create 24" level hard surface at curb without bump-outs
  - Re-instate pathways where stepping stone paths previously existed
  - Slope to drain into Raingarden
- Provide written commitment for perpetual care for plantings, trees, and Raingardens

### OTHER OPTIONS

- Remove all bump-outs (water no longer entering as designed)
- Identify Raingardens as detention basins and relocate them





Award-winning Portland Raingarden (NE Siskiyou Green Street)

No signs

# ISSUES > PROPERTY VALUE DEPRECIATION > SUGGESTED REMEDIES

Curb extension in Portland (NE 35th and Siskiyou)

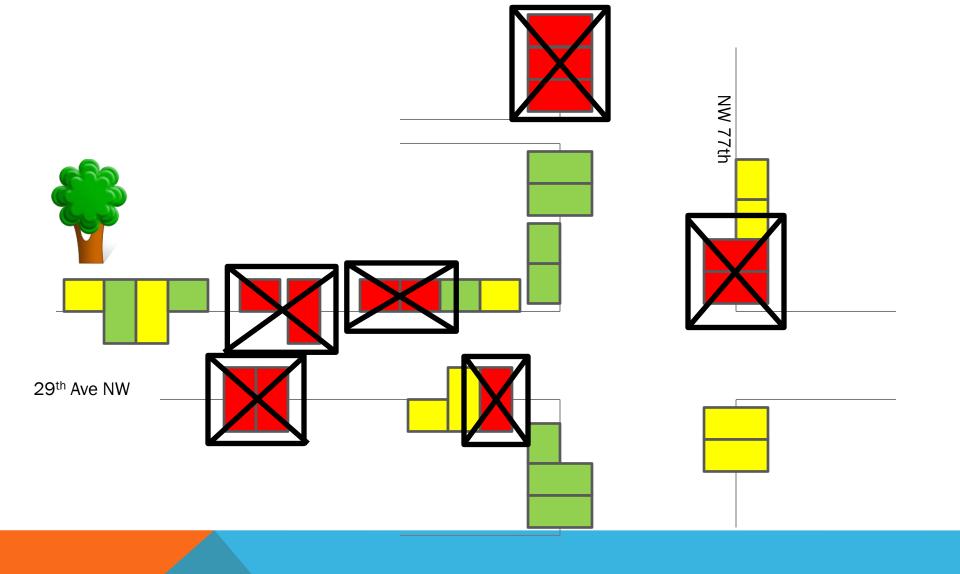
# SAVE OUR PUGE Raingardens Fix the Ballard Roadside Raingardens

### RESIDENTS' GOALS CHECK

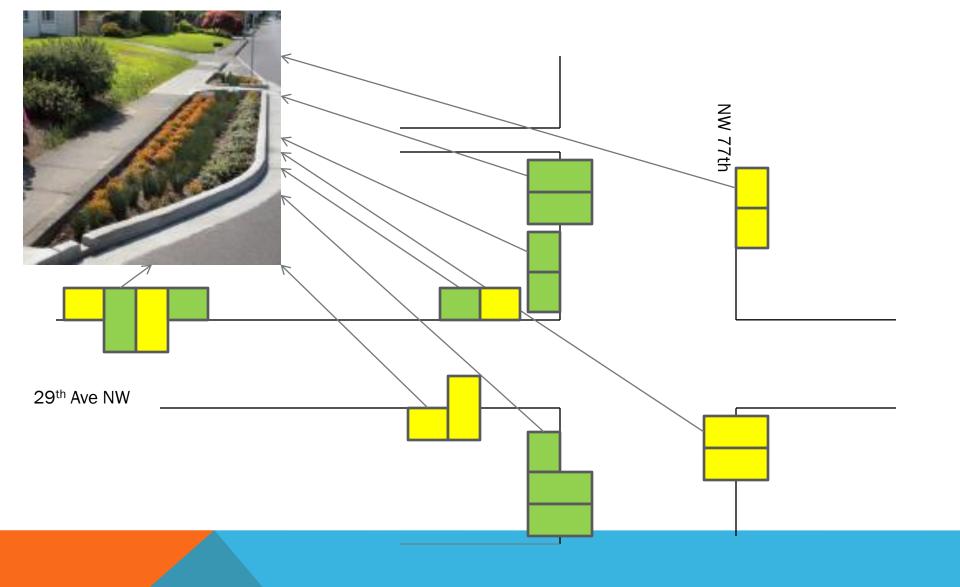


- Support function of Raingardens to decrease run-off into Puget Sound.
- Eliminate all standing water in Raingardens.
- Eliminate all signage. (This may require removal of bump-outs.)
- Raise bio-soil so Raingardens are shallow vegetative depressions.
- Improve Raingarden vegetation.
- Remove bump-out if Raingarden is deemed ineffective (a "dud").
  Replace street with original plate.

### STATUS OF RESIDENTS' GOALS



STATUS OF RESIDENTS' GOALS > SUMMARY OF ASKS > REMOVE INEFFECTIVE RAINGARDENS



STATUS OF RESIDENTS' GOALS > SUMMARY OF ASKS > ENHANCE FUNCTIONING RAINGARDENS

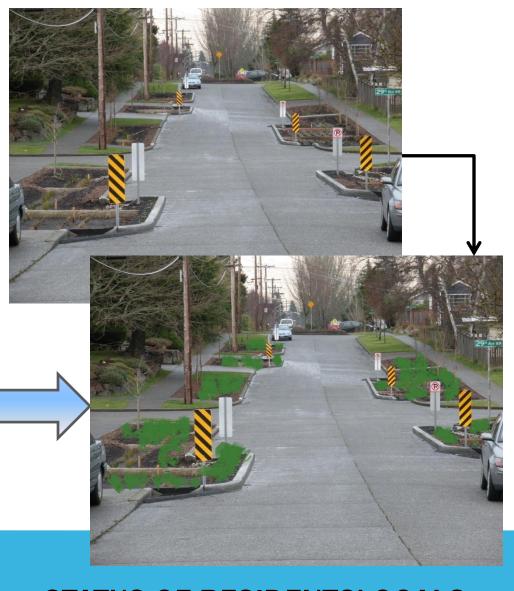
### EXTENSION THROUGH FALL 2011

But waiting 12 to 36 months will *not* resolve the following issues:

- ✓ Ineffective Raingardens
  - Vegetation will not soak up amount of excess water
  - Submerged drainage pipes will not work below water table
- ✓ Prototype design still deep pits, holds pooling water
  - Drowning and injury hazard
  - Mosquitoes
- ✓ Property devaluation
  - Unattractive signage
  - No vehicle passenger egress
  - Narrow streets (from bump-outs)
  - Reduced parking for residents and guests

No prolonged pumping of Raingardens

- Expensive during budget shortfall for city, state
- Safety and health is dependent on if/when they pump



STATUS OF RESIDENTS' GOALS > EXTENSION THROUGH FALL 2011

SAVE OUR PUGE Raingardens

Fix the Ballard Roadside Raingardens



### **COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

## COORDINATION BETWEEN BALLARD RESIDENTS AND S.P.U.



### **Ballard Residents' Asks**

- Be transparent with goals, criteria, measurement of success
- Monitor ongoing Raingarden functioning
- Regularly provide data that measures effectiveness of functioning Raingardens
- Invite community representation (two residents) to determine criteria for effective drainage

Communication v. Coordination

STATUS OF RESIDENTS' GOALS > COORDINATION WITH S.P.U.

I've worked in public health and am very concerned about the lack of drainage in these raingardens for several reasons....Whether these are not working due to lack of foresight of the physical inability of the gardens to drain or for other reasons, the facts speak for themselves and the gardens should be removed as a matter of public safety.

Glad to hear about the details from someone who has had them installed on their block. Yes, we need to find a solution to runoff, but this does not seem to be the answer. The signs, loss of parking, standing water, choice of vegetation, etc. are just too problematic.

Wow. How ugly. Do you not get mosquitos in Seattle?

While I do not live on your black, sympathize with your plig the inevitable day these "sy to my area.

Wow, I just

Having such a liability in front of my house would be a weight I would be loathe to bear. I really feel for the neighbors on this street who have to consider so many negatives every time they see the raingardens remaining full of water.

Thank you very much for sharing this, and I am really quite shocked to hear something negative about this .... I don't understand why standing water should ever be present, furthermore I never knew that some amount of standing water was allowable. Isn't any amount of water dangerous fo safety?

I have a friend who unfortunately lives on 29th NW. I was aghast when I visited her and saw this "raingarden"....I am hoping that the city does not have my neighborhood in mind for this project.

"I thought I wanted the my neighborhood, not don't. I really feet for vou....Good I hope you resolv d

is completely ssue of standing is going to drown in those Ch. their elekted tary chool every day through the chborhood. For the city to cause elderly and all people we three feet of open standing water is to have a tough time egligent. I am shocked....No one is these are not necessary. But the eauty and sanctity of our neighborhoods, and the safety of our children are just as necessary. There is a way to make this work for everyone.

ted a friends home in Ballard and...in the dark I didn't know why it was so wet when there hadn't been a drop of rain in Seattle for days. Upon closer inspection I saw a GIANT mud puddle. A little research on what it was for floored me. The Ballard Raingardens are a danger to kids, adults and will just attract mosquitos if not handled correctly. We must learn from our Portland neighbors on

"You have my support, as I don't want

igheorhood, at 72th bigg as plannedthey ugly, prevent curkside access and are a rd to small children (we have an 18 month old) but they don't drain properly.

THAT'S what's been going on?????.... What a terrible idea! I understand why in en walk to and from theory it would work but to take away all the parking, maneuvering around the muddy holes, making the street an eyesore and allowing kids or animals to get sick from drinking or playing near it is awful! Again, thanks. I am so mad right now.

This is incredible! I can't imagine that this will actually remain the way it is once photos/comments make it to the major papers and news stations! It's horrendous.

I appreciate the idea of the ingardens but I do not support moving forward with the project in its current state. The goals are not unreasonable and if our Mayor and City Council members choose not to listen then their reelection is not an option.

If the raingardens on this street looked like the one in the picture by the park, with river rock, no standing water, and lots of lush landscaping, I don't think these neighbors would be complaining!

These are eyesores and safety hazards. Such a wasted opportunity for the city to destroy this neighborhood instead of embracing this opportunity and making an example of how

### Blog:

http://ballardraingardengue.wordpress.com

### Facebook:

"The Ballard Raingardengue" (Community Page)

Presentation will be posted on docs.com.

**INFORMATION & RESOURCES** 

# SAVE OUR PUGE Raingardens Fix the Ballard Roadside Raingardens

### **APPENDIX**

Washington State Senator **Patty Murray**Washington State Senator **Maria Cantwell** 

Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire

Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn

Seattle City Councilmember Mike O'Brien

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) Project Managers
Chris Woelfel
Karen York

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) Media Relations
Andy Ryan

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), Mgr., Combined Sewer Overflow Andrew Lee

Seattle Department of Transportation (DOT)
Neighborhood Traffic Operations
Luke Korpi, P.E.

## BALLARD ROADSIDE RAINGARDENS PROJECT > SPONSORS

### Drainage issues in roadside raingardens

Posted by Geeky Swedes on October 14th, 2010

To help reduce the amount of storm water that flows into the sewers, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) is building roadside raingardens along 28th Ave NW.

The future raingardens are still under construction and some of them are filling up with water during major storms like we had last weekend, and aren't draining. "The swales have been filling up during the heavy rains and the water has been sitting in them for days without draining," Nancy, one of the neighbors emailed us. "A few days ago there was a group of folks with clipboards and cameras having a meeting on the sidewalk and looking at the full swales."

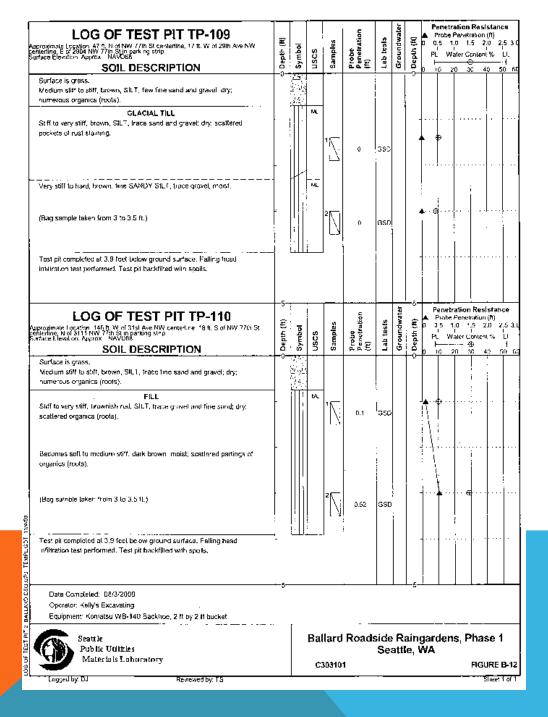
"The drainage capability of the rain gardens will improve when the all of the weirs are installed and the landscaping is planted, mulched and growing," Christine Woelfel, SPU Project Manager Supervisor tells us. "At present, some of the bio-engineered soil isn't draining as anticipated and we'll replace it before the plants and mulch go in."

Woelfel tells us that the inlets for many of the raingardens are plugged with sandbags to keep the water out during construction, and they've discovered that the seal isn't tight enough. "All this rain is complicating the construction and we've needed to pump out the rain gardens to dry them out quickly so the contractor can get back to work as soon as possible to complete the project," Woelfel says.

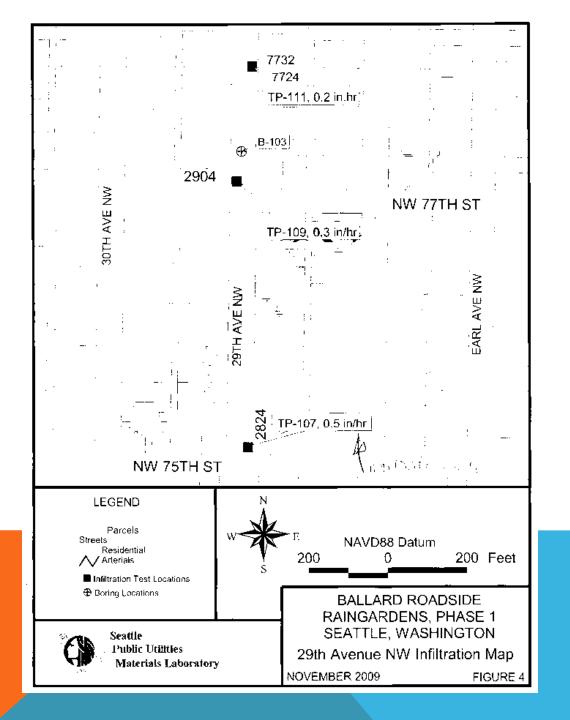
"Additionally, the water depth in some of the unfinished rain gardens was deeper than 6-inches," Woelfel says. "Since 28th Ave NW is a main path for school children, we wanted to be cautious and not allow deeper water, even on a temporary basis, so we pumped them out. Once the construction is done the raingardens will drain normally and pumping will be unnecessary." (Thanks Nancy for the email and photo of the city pumping the raingarden.)

http://www.myballard.com/2010/10/14/drainage-issues-in-roadside-raingardens/

### MyBallard.com article



### **LOG OF TEST PIT**



### **INFILTRATION MAP**